HAMRAG

Visit our website for more club and area ham information at **https://rockfordara.org**

ROCKFORD AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION

RARA Mission Statement

A member association with common interest of public service to the community through the use of amateur radio. RARA is volunteer run, with dues supporting activities, repeaters, nets, and education.

July 2026

Welcome to New RARA Members:

Jack Harweger KD9GVA, Robert Mech, KE9CXN, Ryan Schalk K9MTV, Curt Stadermann KE9FCX, and Mark Vandeusen

Next Meeting

Friday, August 14, 2026 at 7p.m.

Meshtastic Basics

Presented by: Grizz W3GRZ

OSF St Anthony Med Center
(Foundation Room-ground/cafeteria level)
5666 East State St, Rockford IL

Social Time after meeting at Gerry's Pizza
7403 Argus Dr, Rockford IL

Inside this Issue

Thanks to this month's contributors: Dave W9CJS, Doug KE9CNS, Larry KD9HKX, Larry AC9GO, and Verna W9YUM

Cover page	.....	Page 1
President's Message	.....	Page 2
RARA Board & Local Nets	.....	Page 3
Key Dates to Save	.....	Page 4
Field Day—It's a Wrap	.....	Pages 5-11
HamRag Archive Now Available on DLARC	.....	Pages 12-13
The Weather Reported in "NOAA-ESE?	.....	Page 14
From the Workbench	.....	Pages 15-16
RARA Store	.....	Page 17
Hamfest, Contest, DX Links	.....	Page 18
Local Ham and GMRS Breakfasts	.....	Page 19

Editor's Note

If you would like to have something published, please email me at w9yum.vs@gmail.com

Articles are welcome and encouraged from all!

Due Date for the August Ham Rag is Wed Aug 5, 2026

73, Verna—W9YUM, Editor

President's Message– Larry McFall, KD9HKX

Hello fellow RARA members and friends:

One of the major questions the board deals with is how to keep RARA active and interesting for its membership. Our answer to this question has been to promote events that we believe many of our members are interested in participating in and finding programs for our monthly meetings that are educational and interesting. These ideas have been successful in the past and continue to be successful today.

The question then is how do we keep finding fresh ideas for events and programs. I for one firmly believe that fresh ideas can only come from our membership and specifically those members who have yet to become involved in decision making processes; i. e. serving on the RARA board. The great many of you will say to me you don't know enough about the club and how things work in the club to be involved with the board. One of the best ways to learn about the functioning and governorship of the club is to volunteer, to help plan and execute the club events and programs.

Now you might feel the individuals currently leading the club have done a great job and I personally agree with this assessment. They have implemented a lot of good ideas, and pulled off many successful events—last month's Field Day Event is a great example.

Good leadership is hard work and if you do enough hard work you need to rest. Many on the board have done enough hard work, they are ready for a well-deserved rest and need others in the club to step up and take on leadership roles.

As I said earlier to train for leadership roles, one should volunteer to help with events and programs. Consider this your invitation to volunteer to help with upcoming events such as the picnic, the Belvidere hamfest, or JOTA and learn to be a leader in and for the club. Thanks for being a RARA member!

73's and have a great month.
Larry KD9HKX

RARA Board and Local Nets

Tuesday, August 11, 2026 RARA Board Meeting 7:00pm on Google Meet
Friday, August 14, 2026 RARA Membership Meeting 7:00pm OSF St Anthony

2026 RARA Officers and Directors

Officers:
President - Larry McFall, KD9HKX, lpmcfall@pm.me
Vice President - Jamie Cook, W9JTC, W9JTC@yahoo.com
Secretary - Guy Adams, KE9CZZ, ke9czz@gmail.com
Treasurer – Verna Schubert, W9YUM, w9yum.vs@gmail.com

Directors:
Jimmy Curtis, KC9GOL, jimhcurtis7818@yahoo.com
Dan Larson, KD9SAZ, kd9saz@gmail.com
Doug Passmore, KE9CNS, dgpassmore@att.net
Mike Richardson, KB9SSV, kb9ssv@msn.com

HamRag Editor, Website Design, Publicity- Verna Schubert, W9YUM, w9yum.vs@gmail.com
Webmaster - Robert Grizzell, W3GRZ, w9axdrara@gmail.com
Repeater License Trustee - Doug Passmore, KE9CNS, dgpassmore@att.net
Repeater Chairman - Matt Marshall, W3MBX, matthew.marshal@gmail.com

Local Net Information

Mon - 7:00pm - RARA Info. Net & CW Lesson, 146.610 (-0.6) offset, pl 114.8
- 8:00pm - McHenry County RACES Net, 146.835 (-0.6) offset, pl 91.5

Tues - 7:00pm - RARA Tuesday Night Net & CW Lesson , 146.610 (-0.6) offset, pl 114.8

Wed - 7:00pm - Wed Night Chat Net, 146.610 (-0.6) offset, pl 114.8
- 7:00pm - Stephenson County ARES Net, 147.390(+0.6) offset, pl 114.8

Thu - 7:00pm - Winnebago Co. Skywarn Net, 146.610 (-0.6) offset, pl 114.8

Fri - 8:00pm - Friday Night Fun Net, KC9GCR, 146.610 (-0.6) offset, pl 114.8

Sat - 8:00pm - RARA Ragchew Net, 146.610 (-0.6) offset, pl 114.8
- 8:00pm - Pink Hamsters YL Net, Milwaukee 146.910 (-0.6) offset, pl 127.3
- 9:00pm - Saturday Night Fun Net Milwaukee 146.910 (-0.6) offset, pl 127.3

Mon. thru Friday - 8:00am to 9:00am - Senile Net, WD9BB, 14.287 (HF USB)

Save the Dates!

Don't forget—all of the events below can be found on the website calendar! Check it regularly to stay "in the know"! https://rockfordara.org/calendars-events/

Monday, July 20, 2026 (7:30pm)
Winnebago County Skywarn Virtual Meeting
Round Table discussion on operations
Questions—need the meeting link? Reach out to WinnebagoCoSkywarn@gmail.com

Friday, August 14, 2026 (7pm)
RARA Monthly Meeting—Meshtastic Basics (Grizz W3GRZ)
OSF St Anthony—lower level of main entrance in the Foundation Room

Saturday, August 15, 2026
Beloit Club Breakfast and Foxhunt
Ham Radio breakfast 8:00am at Denny's restaurant located at the Flying J travel center (I39 / I90 & IL 75, or Gardener & Willowbrook Rd, South Beloit. We can talk lots of radio!
After the breakfast (about 10:00AM) we will be having a Fox-Hunt starting at the Denny's parking lot. Bring your Fox hunting radios/Antennas!

Sunday September 13, 2026 (noon-4pm)
RARA Family Picnic
Hononegah Forest Preserve, 80 Hononegah Rd, Rockton—Indian Rest Shelter
RARA will supply burgers and dogs, condiments, water, and plates, plastic ware, and napkins. Bring yourself, family, and friends and one or two dishes to share! More details in the August Hamrag. Visit the home page on rockfordara.org to RSVP!

Sunday, September 27, 2026
Radio Expo 2026 (Belvidere Hamfest) Sponsored by the Chicago FM Club
Flea Mkt 6am-3pm, Indoor Market 8am-3pm. VE Testing 9am-noon
Boone County Fairgrounds—8791 IL 76, Belvidere IL
Note: RARA has secured two tables and will have a limited number of advanced tickets available ($10 ea). Please contact Mike Richardson, KB9SSV at kb9ssv@msn.com for more information.

New email address? Phone Number? A new call sign? Upgraded your License? Joined the ARRL?

Don't forget to let us know so our records are accurate and you aren't left out of the loop! Please email updates to Verna W9YUM at w9yum.vs@gmail.com & add me to your contacts.

Summer Field Day 2026—It's a Wrap!

The first ARRL Field Day was held in June 1933. Organized by former ARRL Communications Manager F.E. Handy, it was designed to test the emergency readiness of portable stations and quickly became an annual tradition. Continuing tradition on June 27-28, 2026 we went off grid at YMCA Camp Winnebago, operated on a generator and our antenna donated by Kurt Eversole KE9N to RARA was used to make as many contacts as we could on SSB, CW, and FT8. Grizz W3GRZ handled the computer work and is compiling our scores and we will publish at a later date for everyone.

We had very good weather, excellent food for lunch and dinner. It brought together many of the RARA members we haven't seen in a while and gave us the opportunity to get to know some of our newest members and visitors. I would like to thank everyone involved in the planning and setup and all of the hard work done to make this field day a success.

Thank you,
Douglas Passmore, Field Day Chairman
KE9CNS/WSHJ463

AMATEUR RADIO FD★26 A NATIONAL RESOURCE

I am an amateur radio operator but I have not been very active. I had the chance to go out to field day and met some new people. Their energy and organization was refreshing. I look forward to working with them more.

Jack KD9GVA

My thanks to Verna and Doug. They were both very helpful trying to get me OTA. I also got to talk with the SKYWARN guys and hope to get signed up for class. I brought my neighbor Mike, and he told me he enjoyed himself. I can imagine all the work and effort involved and wanted to let you know how much it's appreciated.
73's Marcus WB9PCT

My personal accomplishment was making my first CW contact with the help of Dave Gaguer and Dave Gauger II.... it's almost more exciting than my first HF contact.

Overall, it was a blast! Very organized, other than a few last minute changes, but that's par for the course. All the networking and FT8 by Grizz was a wonderful addition and worked flawlessly.

Matt W3MBX

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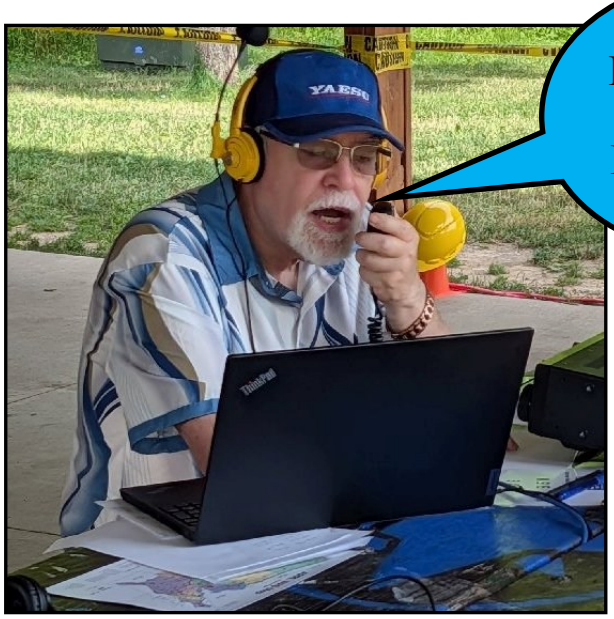
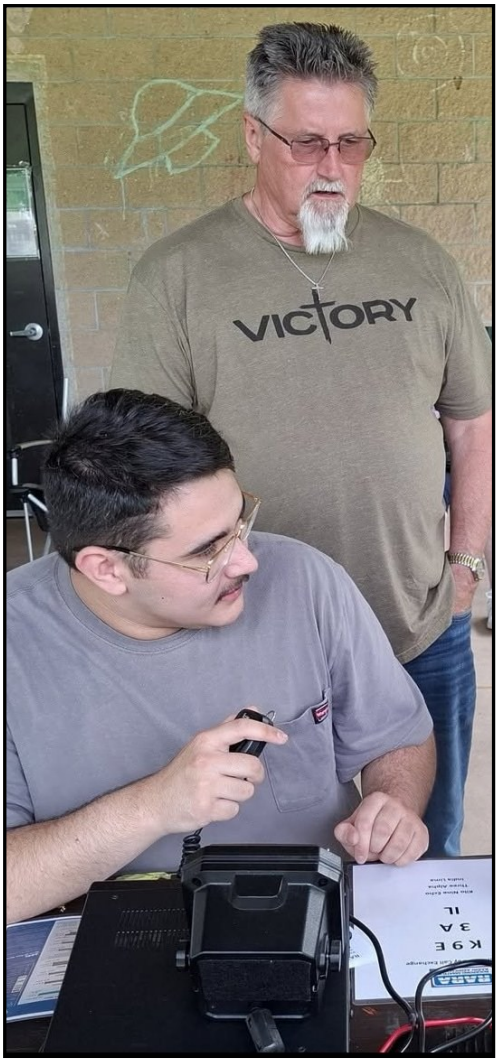
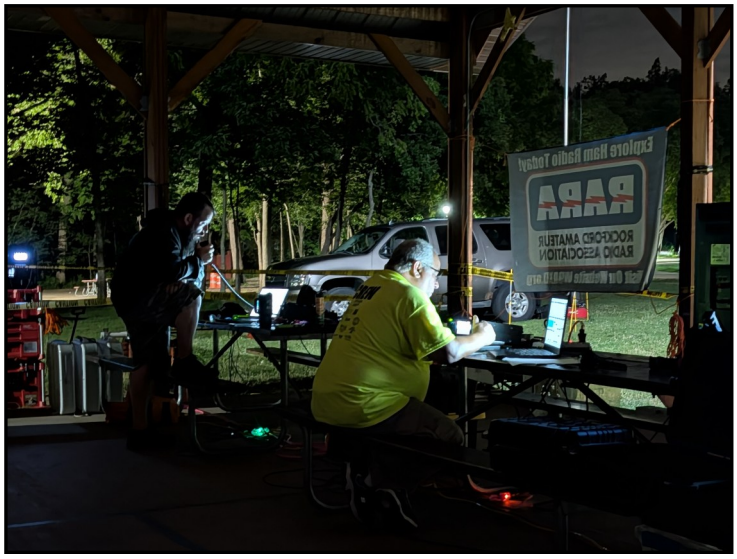
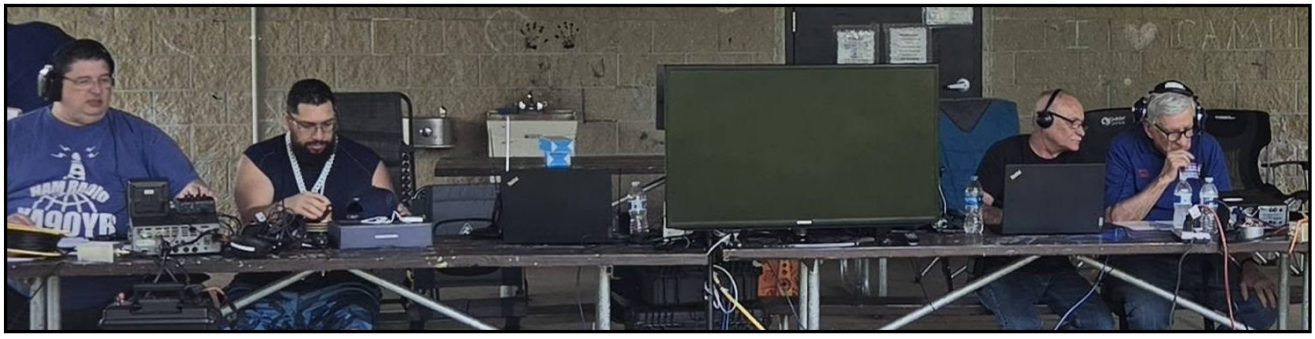




Summer Field Day 2026—It's a Wrap!

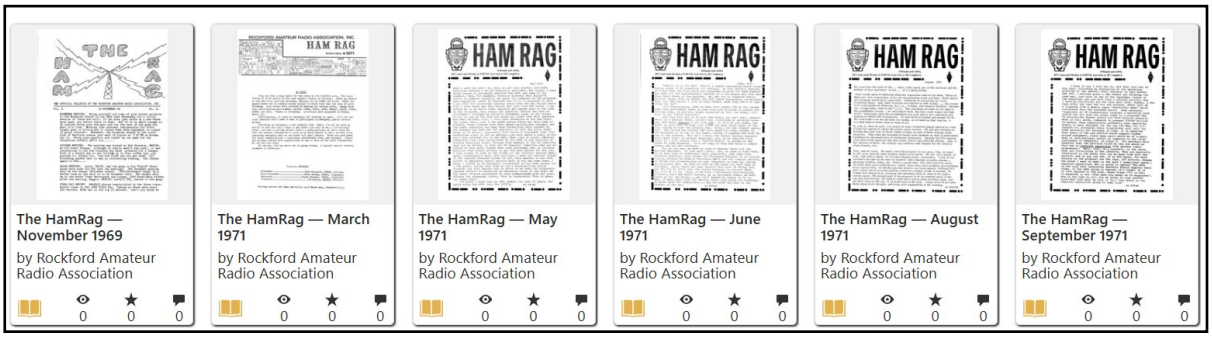




The HamRag is Now Live on the Digital Library of Amateur Radio & Communications (DLARC)

Good news for anyone who has ever wanted to dig back through old club newsletters. Thanks to Grizz W3GRZ, in addition to finding The HamRag on the RARA website (rockfordara.org), our archive is now part of the **Digital Library of Amateur Radio & Communications (DLARC)** which provides a free permanent home for ham radio history hosted by the **Internet Archive**.

The full collection is available at https://archive.org/details/hamrag. As new HamRags are issued, they will be added to the archive ensuring the archive will always be up to date.


The HamRag — November 1969
by Rockford Amateur Radio Association
The HamRag — March 1971
by Rockford Amateur Radio Association
The HamRag — May 1971
by Rockford Amateur Radio Association
The HamRag — June 1971
by Rockford Amateur Radio Association
The HamRag — August 1971
by Rockford Amateur Radio Association
The HamRag — September 1971
by Rockford Amateur Radio Association

No login or account is needed to browse, read, or download the newsletters. Just click the link, and you'll see a list of issues you can open right in your browser or download as a PDF. If you want to search within an issue or across the collection, use the search box near the top of the page — it's a quick way to find a specific author, event, or topic from years past.

If you are interested, a free Internet Archive account takes about a minute to set up at archive.org. Having an account lets you save items to your own library and get notified when new issues are added — handy if you'd like to keep track of the collection as it grows.

What Is the Internet Archive?

The Internet Archive is a non-profit digital library founded in 1996 by Brewster Kahle. It's best known for the Wayback Machine, which has archived hundreds of billions of web pages, but its mission is much broader: to provide "universal access to all knowledge." Over the years it has grown into one of the largest digital libraries in the world, hosting millions of books, audio recordings, videos, software programs, and historical documents — all free to the public.

The HamRag is Now Live on the Digital Library of Amateur Radio & Communications (DLARC)

What Is DLARC?

The **Digital Library of Amateur Radio & Communications (DLARC)** is a project within the Internet Archive dedicated specifically to preserving the history of amateur radio and related communications technology. It launched in late 2022, funded by a grant from Amateur Radio Digital Communications (ARDC), a foundation that supports amateur radio and digital communication science and technology.

DLARC's goal is to build a free, permanent, searchable library of ham radio history — club newsletters, magazines, podcasts, videos, oral histories, product catalogs, and conference recordings — before this material is lost to time, basements, and filing cabinets. Since its launch, the collection has grown to well over 100,000 items, contributed by clubs and individuals from around the world. It's run by Kay Savetz, K6KJN, who actively works with clubs to get their newsletters and historical materials scanned, catalogued, and posted online for good.

Why It Matters

Club newsletters capture the everyday life of amateur radio — meeting notes, project write-ups, contest results, Field Day photos, and the voices of members who came before us. A lot of that history exists only on paper in someone's garage. Having our newsletters on DLARC means they're preserved, backed up, and accessible to anyone, anywhere, for free — including future club members researching our history, or old friends looking to relive a favorite memory.

Spread the Word

If you know a member who's been part of the club for a long time, point them to the link above — there's a good chance they'll recognize a name, a callsign, or even their own byline in there.

Browse our newsletters: https://archive.org/details/hamrag

Explore the full DLARC collection: https://archive.org/details/dlarc

** If you have old newsletters, photos, or other club materials tucked away that aren't yet part of the collection, let's talk about getting them scanned and added by reaching out to RARA **

https://rockfordara.org/hamrag-archive-submission/

THE WEATHER REPORTED IN "NOAA-ESE?" — Dave W9CJS

The weather forecasts I've been used to, said "**T*oday rain, temperature 67. clearing tonight*.** Simple, to the point and enough. But today like bloatware programs, they've created more terms than make sense.

Turning on NOAA weather we all can access, we might hear something like this :

" For today, morning showers with limited but severe scattered thunderstorms... chance of precipitation 60%...[***What the heck is limited but severe?***]

This afternoon, scattered showers after 2:00 pm. Chance of precipitation will be 70%' ⋯ after 7:00 pm, limited but severe showers are likely, extending until 9pm. Chance of precipitation 70% .
[***Why repeat nearly the same chance of rain?]***

"Violent storms are possible in Livingston County ..... **in Northwest Illinois"**
" Violent storms are possible in Carole County..... **in Northwest Illinois"**
" Violent storms are possible in Ogle County..... **in Northwest Illinois"**
" Violent storms are possible in Boone County..... **in Northwest Illinois"**
"Violent storms are possible in LaSalle County ..... **in Northwest Illinois"**
[Wouldn't a single 'in Northwest Illinois' be enough for the entire group/]

And now, not to be ignored, we have invented a plethora of new terms with which to report weather. We're all familiar with some terms like "Cold Snap"

But, how about **A BOMB CYCLONE ?**

Or a POLAR VORTEX –*[makes sense to the weatherman,.. but is it gunna snow?]*

Or a HEAT APOCOLYPSE- *[OOH – it sounds like the end of earthly life]*

Or a FLASH DROUGHT ⋯ *[Maybe a Flash Flood, but a **Flash Drought?** ⋯ what's that?]*

How about a **HEAT APACOLYPSE** *[Sounds like total destruction]*

Or a FIRENADO? ***[W****hee! pillar of fire ???****]***

Or a DEREACHEO ***[****Speak-a de English ⋯ okay?]*

Or a HEAT DOME *[Hmmmm ⋯???]*

Or a GUSTNADO *[Give me a break]*

Of course I speak in jest, but it does seem like "they , whoever they are" go out of their way to affix a name to every natural weather phenomenon .

From the Workbench by Larry AC9GO

Who would ever think of having a power outage just days after the Field Day exercise when we worked with off the grid power for 24 hours? That is exactly what happened to us. On July 3, a severe storm hit Rockton, with wind speeds over 70 mph, toppling trees and downing power poles and lines. Thousands were reported to have lost power and damage was significant. We observed a spot near South Beloit off Hwy 2 where a half dozen poles were broke off at the ground and laying over, not completely on the ground, but held up only by nearby poles and the wires strung through them.

When the storm hit, we heard a crash on the roof that left us wondering if we were going to see a tree come through the ceiling, followed by water running through the house – this was Verna's biggest fear. My biggest fear was for the antenna and tower. It looked OK, but we wouldn't know for sure until power was restored. Once the wind and rain were gone, we ventured outside to a large tree limb lying in front of the house that according to our neighbors from across the street, had come down on the roof, bounced around, and landed in front of the house. There were also limbs that were blown from neighboring trees lying in the yard. Our roof was covered with tree limbs, ranging in size from less than a half inch to maybe 6 inches across. The roof resembled the yard which had one tree part or more for every sq. yard across the whole lawn on a good-sized corner lot.

We received calls and texts from several of our RARA family, checking on us and asking if we needed help. Our neighbor came over with his chain saw and cut up the largest branch so we could move it away from the house. With the power out, they worried about the meat in the fridge for a party they had planned for later in the day. They decided to grill and invited us for a meal which was greatly appreciated. While we were there, mentioned he was worried about a refrigerator food purchased for the now postponed party. I gave a small generator that I figured could handle one refrigerator but didn't feel it would do much more than that. Most of our food was in a freezer and frozen solid.

Our power outages are rare and typically not never more than a couple of hours, so I figured they needed it more than we did. Somewhere late that afternoon, word came to expect power to be out for 24+ hours. At this point we found out about the down power poles and that a nearby transformer had also been blown out. WHAT?? Suddenly everything I had been thinking went to heck and I had to rethink my logic and make some quick decisions. And then as if by magic, Kevin N9EGF, super ham extraordinaire, faster than an electronic QSL card, arrives to save the day with a battery backup system that could handle both the refrigerator, freezer, and more and even get me out of the doghouse with Verna.

From the Workbench by Larry AC9GO

Believe it or not there is a point to this story. On Field Day every year we check our gear and use it to demonstrate that we can get on the air in case of emergency. I could barely reach the repeater with a handheld, we could have gotten on the air, but it would have been limited because our shack HF, VHF and UHF along with a beam that handles 10,15, and 20 meters. The lighting, the rotor control, computers, plus 6 monitors (at least two are essential for logging and digital) all need power, and that doesn't include the Internet. I would like to be able to run the whole house including heat or air, TV, lights, phone chargers and everything. The storms are getting worse, and we want to be prepared. I always thought that I could use a handheld to get on the air either by standing outside or by using an adapter to hook it to the tower antenna. Problem is there are no windows in my basement. And a flashlight will not provide enough light to find an adapter, at least in my mess. I'm thinking I need a whole house unit, but that might be to much. Maybe a unit about the same size as Kevins which really saved the day. I really would like to be prepared for the next outage, not only for me, but also if the community needs help from the outside.

Once again, a BIG THANK YOU to Kevin N9EGF. By the way check out Kevin's article, "New-Fangled Battery Tech" on page 17 of the March 2025 HamRag (can be found on rockfordara.org/archives). It's a three-piece unit that is easy to move and set up, It's worth the read.

Have fun with your radio!
73,
Larry AC9GO

From Freeport Illinois:

The Friday Night Fun Net with Jimmy Dorsey, KC9GCR

Every Friday at 8PM Central Time
W9AXD Repeater 146.610 Rockford Illinois
Live Streamed on the
Kerry Tatlow YouTube Channel
https://www.youtube.com/@ktatlow

The RARA Store—Time for Field Day & Skywarn!

What better way to promote RARA and share your enthusiasm for amateur radio, all while supporting your club and local business! When you shop the online store, RARA receives a commission and you are supporting local amateur radio and repeaters!

Shop the store at stores.inksoft.com/RARA

CQ...CQ...CQ...Check in to the RARA Store
for the latest Skywarn and Field Day gear!
All the favorites are still there!
SKYWARN
Lightning - Unisex 100% Cotton
FIELD DAY
Field Day 2026 - Silk Touch Polo
WINNEBAGO COUNTY
Winnebago County
SKYWARN

Hamfest, Contest and DX Links

hamfests and Swapfests in Northern IL, Northwest IN, and Southern WI **Click the link**

AMATEUR RADIO EVENTS

THE HAM RADIO COMMUNITY IN ACTION!

***Thanks to K9MSG, Kirk Musselman*— www.amateurradioevents.com or use link above**

No more struggling to find local foxhunts, Hamfests, public service/volunteer events and more. **Over 50 events** are all in one place including maps, descriptions, contact links, costs, and more. And, we just added a *Guide for Amateur Radio Volunteers* and a list of worldwide *Amateur Radio History Events* which you can join remotely.

The site will keep updating and expanding to carry more types of events (training, POTA, etc.) so bookmark the site and join us as we bring event organizers and amateur radio operators together to grow the amateur radio community. Please use the contact page to share suggestions, updates, additions, or comments.

WA7BNM Contest Calendar Powered by ICOM

Link to the WA7BNM Contest Calendar or go to www.contestcalendar.com

Want to see what's new in the world of DX? Select the link below and make sure you check out the weekly bulletins or go to www.dxworld.net

Powered by ICOM

DX WORLD.net

Local Ham & GMRS Breakfasts

WEEKLY FRIDAY MORNING BREAKFAST

Meets every Friday morning from 7:30 am until about 9:00 am.
We order breakfast at 8:00 am.

An informal gathering of ham folks,
no affiliations necessary, good food and good company.

Everyone is welcome to attend.

"The Spring Garden Family Restaurant"
4820 N. 2nd Street
Loves Park, IL 61111

MONTHLY SATURDAY MORNING BREAKFAST

The Greater Beloit Amateur Radio Club (GBARC) meets monthly on the 2nd Saturday of the month at 8:00 a.m.

Denny's Restaurant
Flying J Truck Stop (IL 75 & 190/39)
All are welcome to join the group for food and lot's of "ham" talk.

BI-MONTHLY SATURDAY MORNING BREAKFAST

The Rock River Valley GMRS Breakfast Club meets on the First and Third Saturdays each month at 9:00 a.m.

Mr. C's Family Restaurant
4309 W State Street
Rockford, Illinois 61102